

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:24 p.m. in Pauley Pavilion at the 75th anniversary convocation. In his remarks, he referred to Charles E. Young, chancellor, University of California-Los Angeles; Mayor Richard Riordan of Los Angeles; Jack W. Peltason, president, and Sue Johnson, board of regents vice chairperson, University of California; Harold T. Shapiro, president, Princeton University; Kate Anderson, president, UCLA Undergraduate Student Association; and Khosrow Khosravani, external vice president, UCLA Graduate Student Association. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks at a Fundraiser for Senator Dianne Feinstein in Beverly Hills, California

May 20, 1994

Thank you very much to my friend Willie Brown and to Sally Field for those wonderful comments, to Ron and Jan Burkle for inviting us here to their beautiful place, to Dick Blum and all the other supporters of Senator Feinstein's campaign.

There are two remarkable things about this evening for me. The first is, this is the third time I have been here, and every time I come, when I go back to the White House, I feel like I'm in reasonably nice public housing. [Laughter] The second thing is that I want Dianne Feinstein to be reelected so badly that I have spoken at two of her fundraisers, but this is the first one where she's showed up. [Laughter] It's a humbling job I've got. [Laughter]

You know, Hollywood discovers stars all the time, and now America is beginning to discover Dianne Feinstein. [Applause] You can clap for that. She's sort of replacing Tommy Lasorda as the person people think of when they think of California. [Laughter] You know, before I started running for President, that's what I thought of in California. I'd see Tommy Lasorda getting smaller and smaller and smaller on television, saying he'd shrunk himself with that Slim-Fast. That's what we're trying to pour into the Federal budget. [Laughter] Now the deficit is down; the Dodgers are in first place. I've asked

Lasorda to take over the lobbying for health care reform. [Laughter]

I don't know—before we get to Dianne's main event we'll have to watch this primary with Bill Dannemeyer and Michael Huffington, who spent \$5½ million of his own money in the last election. And now he's spent \$2 million to go on television to review Bill Bennett's book. I don't know how she can hope to meet and defeat a person who is foursquare for virtue. But I want to say a little more about that in a moment. I think Dianne Feinstein works for virtue and embodies virtue, and I hope she will be returned on that basis.

I want to say something serious, if I might. This is a, actually, kind of tough day for me to give a speech. I had the opportunity, as Senator Feinstein said, to go with her and Senator Boxer and others to the Inland Empire today to talk about how we could revitalize San Bernardino after the Norton Air Force Base closure and what is being done there, which is truly astonishing, and then to go to UCLA and speak to some wonderful young people at their convocation. But this is a sad day for Hillary and for me because Jackie Kennedy Onassis passed away last night, and she was not only a great symbol of courage and grace and dignity for our country, but she was a real friend of ours and a special friend of my wife and very kind to our wonderful daughter. And like many of you, when I heard last night that she had lost her fight, my mind began to race over the last 30 years, back to how it was then, back to how it is now, back and forth, what happened in between.

One thing that Jackie and John Kennedy surely did was to make us all believe that somehow together we could make a difference, that what we did mattered, that our role as citizens was important, and that if we gave ourselves to public service, that was the sign of good judgment and compassion. It was a fine thing to do. In other words, we lived in a time then when there was much less cynicism and pessimism and skepticism and in which public discourse was a thing of honor, not a shouting match bent on destruction and division and distraction.

I honestly believe that our ability to bring this country into the 21st century as strong

as it needs to be and as united as it needs to be depends perhaps more than anything else on our uncommon strength of purpose which we have mustered in times past, this time to muster on our own state of mind, to fight against all the forces that seek to drag us down and pit us against one another, and to somehow elevate our sense of common purpose.

It isn't easy, and there are lots of folks who hope it won't happen for all kinds of reasons. But if you think about this race in which Dianne Feinstein is involved, it is an example of what we plainly have to do. I'll never forget last fall when she was fighting for the assault weapons ban. And she called and she said, "Now, you said you were for this, Mr. President, and I want you to help me." And I said, "Well, Dianne, we're probably not going to win, but I'll work like crazy for it." So, she gave me my list to call, and call I did. *[Laughter]* And then, that incredibly sensitive Senator on the other side of the issue said that—*[laughter]*—she needed to become a little more familiar with firearms and their deadly characteristics. You all remember what she said in return. She recalled how she became the mayor of San Francisco, how she tried to find the pulse of her slain colleague, how she had been trained in the shooting of a firearm when she had terrorist attacks, with a bomb in her house when her husband was dying, when her windows were shot out.

Well, I don't know if that other guy's made a speech on the floor of the Senate since then. *[Laughter]* But I do know that speech had something to do not only with the passage of the assault weapons ban but with changing the tone and tenor of the debate in the United States Senate over an issue of immense national importance.

When we were trying to get the assault weapons bill passed in the House—same song, second verse—Charles Schumer, a wonderful Congressman from Brooklyn, had carried this bill and had been defeated by 70 votes in 1991. Some significant changes were made in the bill; it was clarified and tightened up a bit. And we even did something that had never been done before, we listed several hundred purely hunting and sporting weapons that were protected under

this law. And Senator Feinstein went to work and Chuck Schumer went to work. And so Chuck called me, and he said, "Well, Mr. President, we really need your help. We're probably 40 votes behind and we can't get there, but we ought to try." And I said, "I'd be happy to lose in this cause, but don't be too sure that we can't make it."

Well, you all know what happened. But I wish I could tell you all the stories that produced that 216-to-214 vote victory. One of the clearer reasons was that a conservative Republican from Illinois who is very much respected among his party members, Henry Hyde, was undecided when Dianne Feinstein sent him a big, fat briefing book which included a list of the assault weapons shootings in Illinois since 1991. Henry Hyde stunned the entire Congress by announcing that he had changed his position, he was going to vote for the ban. And he credited Dianne Feinstein for providing him with convincing information.

When that happened, then other things started to happen. First one, then another person would announce for the bill. A Congressman from Michigan in a hunting area, who had never in 20 years in Congress, never cast one vote against the NRA, changed his position. Two Democrats from difficult constituencies, one of whom was an ex-police officer, changed their vote walking down the aisle to cast their ballot, people knowing they were putting their careers at risk because they grew weary of the shouting and pushing and the division and the rhetoric and they wished something to happen. And in doing that, they ennobled the whole public enterprise again. They made us all believe that, yes, we can, together, make a difference.

I ran for President, as I told those young people at UCLA today, because I thought my generation did not finish its work for America, because I did not want to see my daughter grow up to be part of the first generation of Americans to do worse than their parents in a country that was coming apart when it ought to be coming together, because I always felt that we could restore the purpose of America and the promise of America if we committed ourselves together to create opportunity, to insist upon responsibility from our citizens, and to reestablish

the common bonds of community in this country.

That's what I think Dianne Feinstein is doing. You know, she's been criticized lately on the television for voting for our economic plan last year. Let me tell you why that was such a tough vote. It was such a tough vote because in Washington for so long we had heard nothing but hot air rhetoric instead of reality about what it took to get the deficit down.

My fellow Americans, there are only three ways to get the deficit down. One is to raise taxes; the other is to cut spending; the third is to grow the economy. We did all three with that economic program. And it was the right thing to do. In the first 15 months of this administration there have been 3 million new jobs, one million alone in the first 4 months of this year. We will have, when the Congress passes this year's budget, 3 years of deficit reduction in a row for the first time since Harry Truman was President of the United States of America. At the end of 5 years, we will have reduced the size of the Federal Government to a point where it is below 2 million people for the first time since John Kennedy was President. And all the savings will be put into a trust fund to pay for the crime bill to make our streets safer. That is what we have been doing in Washington.

Yes, Senator Feinstein voted for the bill, and so did Senator Boxer. And I guess you could say if either one of them hadn't, we wouldn't have had it. Then we would have had what we've been having for 12 years: a lot of rhetoric, no reduction in the deficit, no reduction in interest rates, no growth in the economy. But people would still be able to make speeches. You have to decide whether you want real progress and tough decisions made or more of what you had before. It wasn't very good for the California economy, and we're beginning to turn that around.

You know, one of the things we have to decide is what standard we are going to require in our public discourse. I know when I see an advertisement running against a Senator like Dianne Feinstein, saying that this program was just a tax bill—well, let me tell you, 300,000 people or a little more than 2 percent of your taxpayers, including nearly

everybody in this room—[laughter]—paid more.

You need to know that 100 percent of that money, 100 percent of it, went to bringing the deficit down. You also need to know that 2 million of your fellow citizens actually got an income tax cut, 15 percent of the Californians. Why? Because they're low-wage workers with children who are hovering just above the poverty line, and we want to encourage them to stay in the work force instead of going on welfare. I think most Americans think that's a good investment.

Ninety percent of the small businesses in this country qualified for tax cuts under the bill. California was helped by the capital gains tax for investments in new enterprises, by the research and experimentation tax credit, by—now because your college costs have gone up—the availability of lower cost college loans with longer repayment terms. That's what was in that economic program that Dianne Feinstein voted for that had the most deficit reduction in history. I don't think it's fair to characterize it as a tax bill, and I don't think it furthers the public debate. All it does is further the present state of high rhetoric and division.

I made a remark a few moments ago about the publicity about Bill Bennett's book. Some of you probably haven't read it, but it basically quotes other people on virtues. You can't run a democracy without an addiction to truth and to fairness. What Dianne Feinstein deserves is truth and fairness. If she gets it, she'll be overwhelmingly reelected.

Senator Feinstein talked a little about breaking gridlock. That's one of the things I was hired to do. It took 7 years to pass the Family and Medical Leave Act, 7 years to pass the Brady bill, 5 years to get a crime bill. That's how long it takes to get things done in Washington. It's taken us about a year to 15 months to get a lot of these things done. We are turning these things around.

I'd also like to say that Dianne Feinstein is one of the most effective lobbyists of anybody in Congress. I said today—lobbying the President, that is—[laughter]—I said today when she and Barbara Boxer come after me at the same time, it's sort of like Mutt and Jeff, you know. [Laughter] And it's like—I feel almost as if they've got this gigantic fin-

gernail file that they're putting on my head and rubbing it, you know. And if I will just say yes, they will stop. [*Laughter*] I mean, "Just Say Yes," that's what they want me to do. This is a serious issue. You don't know how I've suffered from this. [*Laughter*] It is literally true that no Member of the Senate has called me more persuasively, more frequently for projects that would create jobs, deal with the crime problem, or deal with the immigration problem in a responsible way than Dianne Feinstein, nobody in the Congress. She's helped me to change the whole approach of the national bureaucracy on defense conversion and base closings so that we can turn closed bases into economic oases for the 21st century.

She has helped me to pass a crime bill that has not just this assault weapons ban but a bill to provide 100,000 more police officers for our streets, not only to catch criminals but to keep crime from happening by working with the children and the neighbors and the people in the community; that has not only tougher punishment with the "Three strikes and you're out" law but also more prevention to give our kids something to say yes to and a chance to turn away from a life of violence and to turn away from resolving their differences in a destructive way toward finding constructive ways of dealing with problems and frustrations and anger. This is a very important piece of legislation.

You heard Sally talk about the California Desert Protection Act. That also has been bottled up for 7 years. And after she came to the Senate, it passed 69 to 29. You wonder what it was doing for the last 7 years.

On this immigration issue, you're going to hear a lot about it during this campaign, and you'll probably hear the incumbent Governor putting a lot of pressure on me to do more. I don't mind that. I don't think the States have been treated fairly who have had large immigration problems, not just California, but Florida and New York and New Jersey and other States. They have not been treated fairly or adequately. But I'll tell you this, in the last year we got more money for California in education, health care, and border patrol officers dealing with the cost of immigration than had been the case in the previous 4 years. We are doing better. We are moving

in the right direction, thanks to the fact that Dianne Feinstein has taken a responsible, constructive approach, not just a rhetorical, pressure oriented approach. She is doing something that makes sense, that will actually make a dent in this problem. And she ought to be rewarded for it.

So I say to you, this Senator, in a remarkably short period of time, has established herself as a national leader on the economy, on crime, on the environment, on immigration. That's an amazing record in no more time than she's been there. And she's had the courage to challenge her colleagues and her President to produce, to lower our guards, to trust each other, to talk through these problems.

One of the things that I felt very strongly, having been a Governor, was something I know Dianne felt, having been a mayor, and that is that most of our problems that we face now as a country and as a people, do not fall easily within the past labels of partisanship.

You know, I'll just tell you a story that just tore my heart out. Last week I was on my way to what I thought would be a wonderful day in Indianapolis to dedicate a site for a statue honoring Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy on the site where Robert Kennedy spoke in Indianapolis on April 4, 1968, the night Martin Luther King was killed. And some of you may remember that magnificent speech which calmed the crowds in Indianapolis and made it one of the major cities in America where there was not a riot after Dr. King's assassination. And I was so excited. And Ethel Kennedy went with me, and two of Martin Luther King's sons went with me. And they had just come back from South Africa. And they were ebullient, and we were all so happy. And it's a wonderful thing, this statue's going to be made out of metal melted down from guns turned in by gun buy-back programs sponsored by the Indiana Pacers. It's very exciting. And I picked up my notes and read yet another story of another human tragedy. A 13-year-old boy in Greenbelt, Maryland, right outside Washington, had just won a scholarship to a prestigious school, standing on a street corner waiting for a bus, shot dead when he got caught in the crossfire between two groups

of warring youngsters, neither of whom knew him or gave a rip about him. He just happened to be in the way.

Now, when I hear that story, or when I get yet another letter from somebody telling me they can never change jobs because they've got a child with a terrible illness and their preexisting condition won't allow any other employer to give them health insurance, or when somebody talks to me like they did in San Bernardino today about whether there are going to be enough jobs for their children there after the base closings, it just seems to me that those are the things that our public discourse ought to be concentrated on. When I looked at those kids at UCLA today, that's what I thought.

You know, in this country today—it's going to be a great test for Willie Brown with his new talk show—most people—I'm serious, I'm serious—he's a delightful man with a wonderful personality, he'll pull it off. But the truth is that most people who talk sense and try to bring out the best in folks today are not great commercial successes. If you want to immediately become a popular culture figure, just bad-mouth somebody; they'll give you a talk show. You think about it. We have to fight against that.

I want to end where I began. If you think about what the Kennedys meant to us a generation ago, they were able to do that because we had inside a willingness, a willing heart, a listening ear, a willingness to be summoned to higher purposes, a willingness to believe that we could come together, a willingness to believe that we could make a difference. You all still have that here. You can feel it here tonight. Those kids at UCLA—62 percent of the student body now minority students, they're in the majority, just as they will be in many States within a very few years—you could feel it there. What we owe to our country is to change the heart of the country. We just simply cannot be, with all these challenges before us, all of which, by the way, can be met with sufficient effort and thought and constancy, we cannot afford to be divided, diverted, distracted. We cannot.

We have to have our hearts and our ears and our eyes open. We have to stop shouting at each other and start talking with each other. And we surely have to make a begin-

ning by retaining in public life those people who have devoted themselves to actually doing something that makes a difference.

You will rarely find anybody who has served in the United States Senate for 6 or 12 years who has been involved in so many things that make a difference as has Dianne Feinstein in her very short tenure there. I hope you will renew it and extend it. The Nation needs it, and it will be good for the spirit of California and the feeling that we have to bring back to our whole country.

Thank you very much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 p.m. at the Green Acres Estate. In his remarks, he referred to Willie Brown, speaker of the California State Assembly; actress Sally Field; Ron and Jan Burkle, hosts of the fundraiser; Richard Blum, Senator Feinstein's husband; Tommy Lasorda, manager of the Los Angeles Dodgers baseball team; Bill Danner and Michael Huffington, candidates for the Republican senatorial nomination; and William Bennett, former Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Statement on Cuban Independence Day

May 20, 1994

On this May 20th, Cuban Independence Day, I wish to convey to the Cuban-American community the best wishes of the American people. We fully share your hopes and aspirations for a future when the people of Cuba can enjoy freedom and democracy. For over three decades, Cuba has suffered under an inhumane dictatorship. It's my deep and committed desire that the Cuban people will live in liberty.

The centerpiece of my administration's foreign policy toward Latin America and the Caribbean has been a commitment to democracy, human rights, and accountable government. A welcome tide of democratic government has swept throughout the hemisphere. The will of the people is being expressed through democratic elections and the strengthening of the rule of law.

Only two countries in the entire hemisphere remain outside this democratic com-